

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested. Claims 3, 4, 7, and 8 remain pending, claims 3 and 7 being independent.

Prior Art Rejection

Claims 3, 4, 7, and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by *Suzuki et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,094,218). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The *Suzuki* patent relied on by the Examiner issued on July 25, 2000 from an application filed July 7, 1997. Therefore, the effective prior art date of the reference under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is July 7, 1997. The present application is a Rule 53(b) divisional of application Serial No. 08/696,062 filed August 13, 1996. Thus, the effective U.S. filing date for the present application is prior to the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) date of the applied reference. At least for this reason, Applicant respectfully submits that the asserted prior art rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 based on the asserted *Suzuki* patent.

Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully

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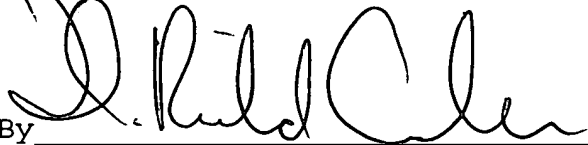
requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Applicant respectfully petitions for a one (1) month extension of time pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a). A check in the amount of \$110.00 in payment of the extension of time fee is attached.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By _____

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